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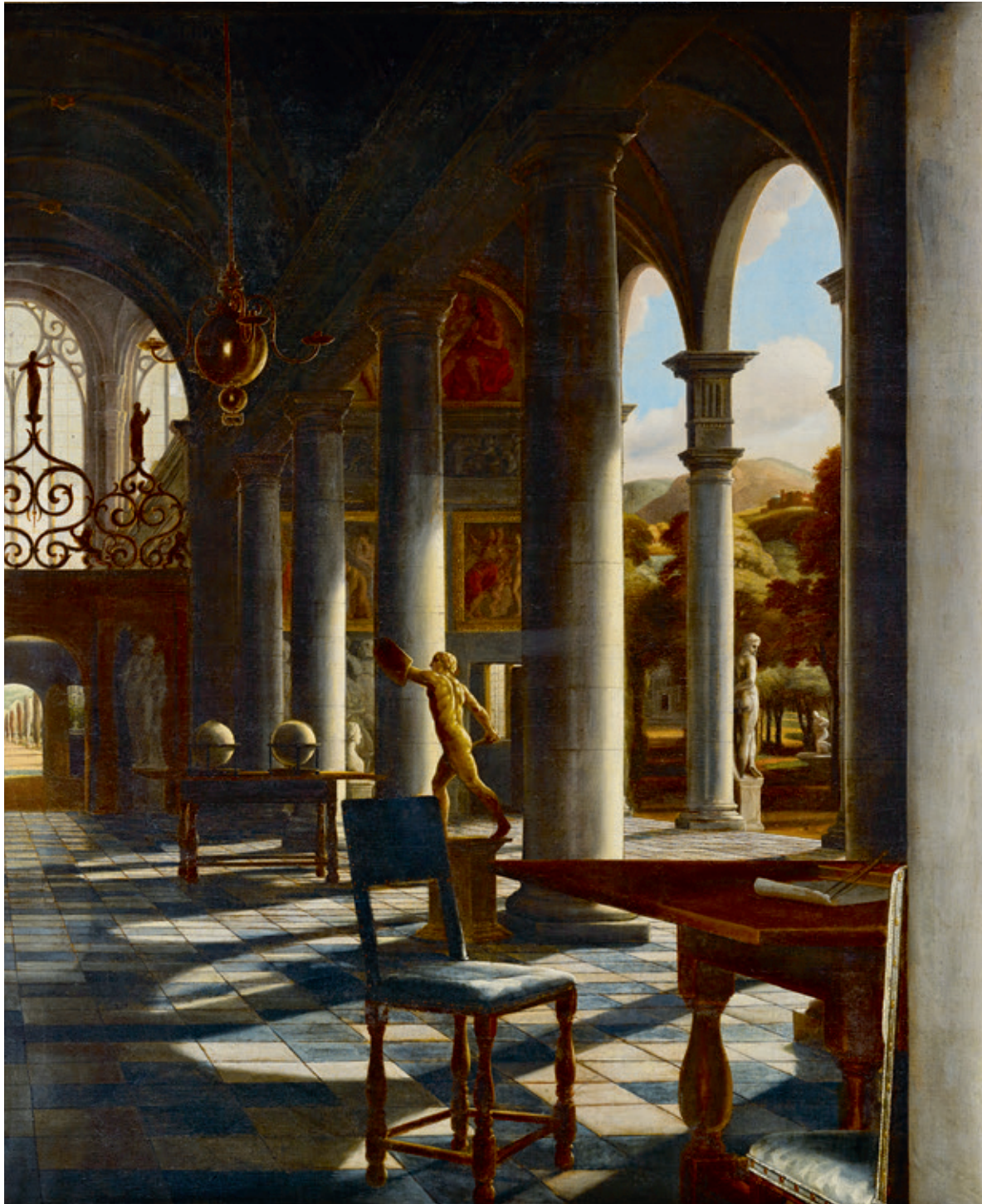
Celeste Brusati

INTRODUCTION TO SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRATEN'S *VISIBLE WORLD*

“Surely,” wrote Samuel van Hoogstraten, “the art of painting consists in doing well, not speaking well.”¹ This pithy remark nicely captures a core theme of his *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere wereld*, translated here as *Introduction to the Academy of Painting; or, The Visible World*.² It is not without irony that Van Hoogstraten made this point several pages into the most substantial account of painting left to us by a Dutch artist of the later seventeenth century. Hardly a model of concision, he spoke well and at length about his art. To read Van Hoogstraten's *Visible World* is to tap into the singular effort of an ambitious, well-read, and well-traveled Dutch painter to collate and package his knowledge of painting for the instruction and amusement of his compatriots. Modern readers facing this prolix text may be amused to learn that it was likened in its day to Ariadne's thread as a trusty guide through painting's complexities.³ Today, for those willing to follow Van Hoogstraten's meandering threads through what contemporaries referred to as Pictura's labyrinth, the book offers a cornucopia of literary performances, witty asides, and sharp insights into art practice and pedagogy inflected by the conditions of artistic production in the late seventeenth-century Netherlands.

Beyond this local knowledge, Van Hoogstraten's book testifies to broader developments in the artistic and intellectual culture of his day. It bears witness to the transformations wrought by the diffusion of learning via print and translation, the emergence of diverse vernacular reading cultures, and the changing valuations of the role of trained observation and technical know-how in the creation of knowledge and the understanding of the natural world. It also registers the expanded visual parameters of that world through its many references to natural phenomena and customs beyond Europe's borders and through the author's attention to and delight in the experiences generated by new optical technologies that brought into the eye's reach both the vastness of the heavens and the previously invisible realms glimpsed through the lenses of the microscope. Van Hoogstraten's procedures for training the painter's coordinated use of hand, eye, and mind engage contemporary preoccupations with skilled observation, the nature of color, the behavior and image-making properties of light, and conditions of visual perception.

Published in 1678, just months before the author's death at the age of fifty-one, this nearly four-hundred-page “introduction” to the art of painting was the most ambitious of Van Hoogstraten's several literary endeavors and the capstone of a multifaceted artistic career that spanned three decades and several European locales. The book appeared not only at the end of the author's life but also late in



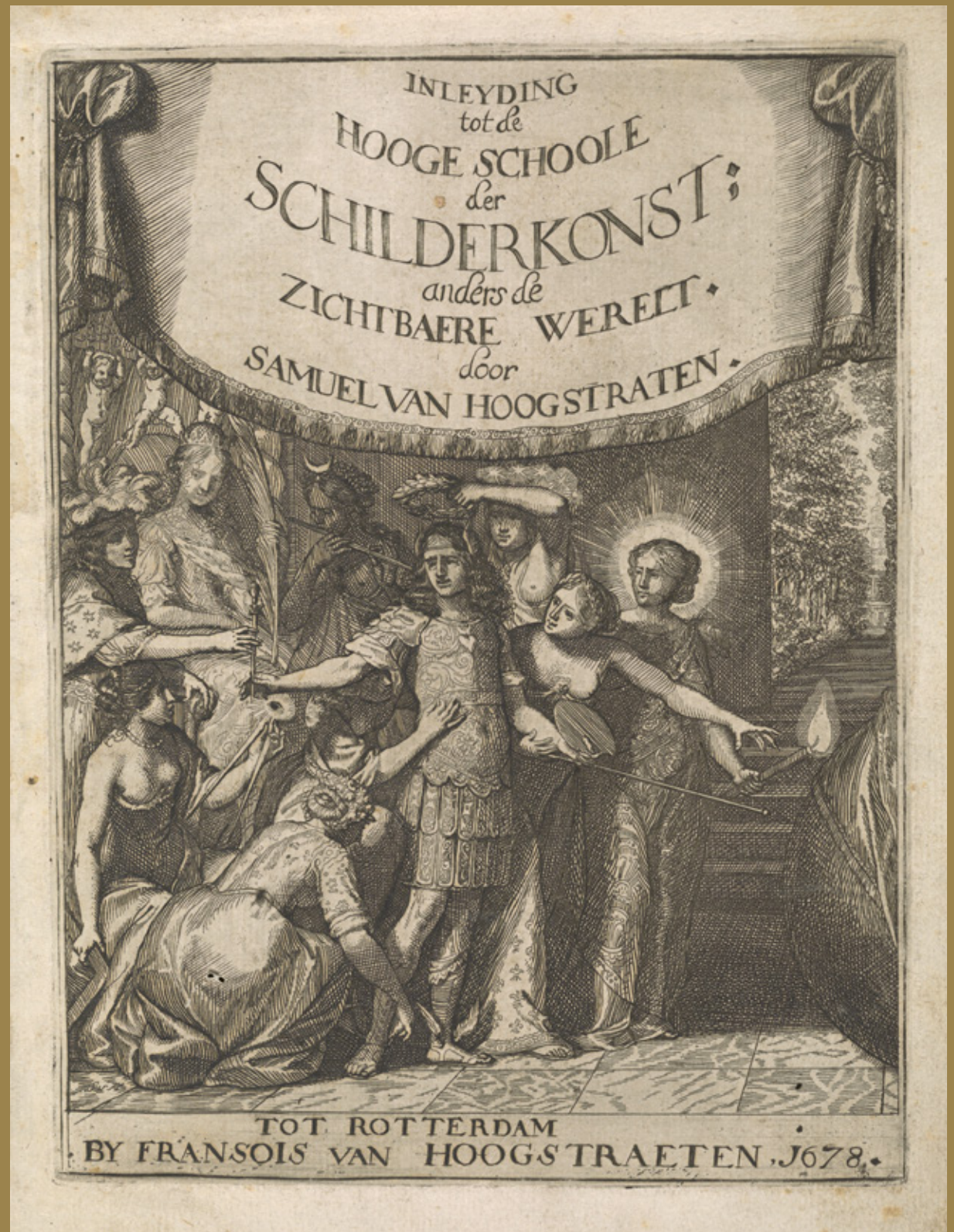


Fig. 1.
Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch,
1627–78). Frontispiece,
etching and engraving,
platemark: 16.2 × 12.4 cm.
From Samuel van Hoogstraten,
*Inleyding tot de hooge schoole
der schilderkonst, anders de
zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam:
Fransois van Hoogstraeten,
1678).

I N L E Y D I N G
TOT DE HOOGHE SCHOOLE DER
SCHILDERKONST:

Anders de

ZICHTBAERE WERELT.

*Verdeelt in negen Leerwinkels, yder bestiert
door eene der*

ZANGGODINNEN.

Ten hoogsten noodzakelijk, tot onderwijs, voor alle die deeze
edele, vrye, en hooge Konst oeffenen, of met yver zoe-
ken te leeren, of anders eenigzins beminnen.

Beschreven door

SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRAETEN.



Tot ROTTERDAM.

By *Fransois van Hoogstraeten*, Boekverkooper,
M. DC. LXXVIII. o

INTRODUCTION
TO THE ACADEMY OF
PAINTING:

Or,

THE VISIBLE WORLD.

Divided into Nine Teaching Workshops,
Each Governed by One of the

MUSES.

Of the Utmost Necessity in Educating
Those Who Practice This Noble, Liberal,
and High Art, or Diligently Seek to Learn It,
or Otherwise in Whichever Way Love It

Described by

SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRAETEN¹

AT ROTTERDAM

By *Fransois van Hoogstraeten*, Bookseller

1678

[iii] Fig. 2.

Title page. From Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam: Fransois van Hoogstraeten, 1678).

**To the Lord Samuel van Hoogstraten
on his Introduction to the Academy of Painting**

Formerly, when one used to seek
 Nine sisters, nine books
 Spawned from an ingenious brain,
 They were those of Herodotus.
 But now it must be different,
 Nine have now risen,
 From the spirit of your intellect,
 And by your famous hand.
 Thus in writing I will let the Greek
 Remain in his antiquity,
 And note here on this occasion
 That he was an honor to the Greeks.
 But you to whom your city is much obliged,
 For your panels and your poems,
 I will grant on my part
 That you will be Apelles.
 Or, if you wish more elevated houses
 And lodging with the Muses,
 Daughters of the Helicon,
 You will be the Sun.

C.[ornelis] van Someren⁵

**[viii] On the Likeness of the Lord Samuel van Hoogstraten,
in His Academy of Painting**

Nature, inclined to portray herself,
 Chose the brush of him, of whom
 Ferdinand, amidst matters of state, never tired
 And so celebrated the power of the highly gifted mind:
 I admired Apelles for his ingenuity,
 And Orpheus struck my heart with his perfect poetry,
 But behold him, in whom the two are combined;
 What more praise can I offer? Does one light a torch to see the sun?

Jacob van Someren,⁶ jurisconsulte

On the Likeness of S[amuel]. v[an]. H[oogstraten].

This shadow depicts Hoogstraeten's countenance;
 He makes poems in his painting, and painting in his poems.

B.T.V.⁷

**On the Introduction to the Academy of Painting
by S[amuel]. v[an]. Hoogstraeten.**

To wander the pastures of painting, so alluring to the eye,
 Ariadne's thread provides us a sure guide;
 Otherwise we will go astray (for certain!)
 And lose the right way among so many winding paths.
 The courageous hero Theseus, entering the labyrinth,
 Feared not the bull's breed, but the deceit of so many passages,
 Which crossed his path and hampered his advance.
 The gruff bull-monster he vanquished in close combat,
 But first he had to fasten the thread at the entrance,
 And follow that ball of thread again to escape safely.
 That labyrinth, that colossus, and that confusion,
 When the path leads here, and there, and everywhere,
 Resembles the art of painting with its ingenuity and inventions;
 A looseness, bound together completely by its foundation;
 A firmness, undone by its loose dissolution;
 A burlesque multitude, a unity that resists mingling;
 Or could there not be found in that forest a monster
 Of badly conjoined limbs, more horrendous,
 [ix] Than a bull's offspring or half-human monster?
 What could the lyre player reveal from his dreams,
 When seeking to teach the art of poetry to his pupil?
 Certainly, he could find a monster, but not praise his find:
 For although he seems to allow all the painters
 And the choir of poets to be at liberty and free,
 It is under the directive and precondition
 That this freedom does not move them to aberrations,
 In which sweet and sour are joined together,
 In which snake with bird, and lamb with tiger mates.
 Now hear the news, the example, and the lessons,
 Of nine beauties, yes, so many enchantresses,
 Who guide not just the pupil but also the beholder, again and again,
 (As if it were in Amadis's enchanted palace)
 Into a court in which on all sides,
 The many levels, vaults, and galleries,
 Are adorned with such splendor and richness of ingenuity
 That it astounds the cleverest Daedalus of art.
 How can I dissect these chambers, these lovely
 And excellent jewels, covered from top to bottom in art?
 From which the twisted shape, if displeasing to the eye,
 From which the frightening monster of deformity has been chased:
 But not in such a way as to deviate from the trail of art,
 If one, with Virgil, is to depict the assemblage,

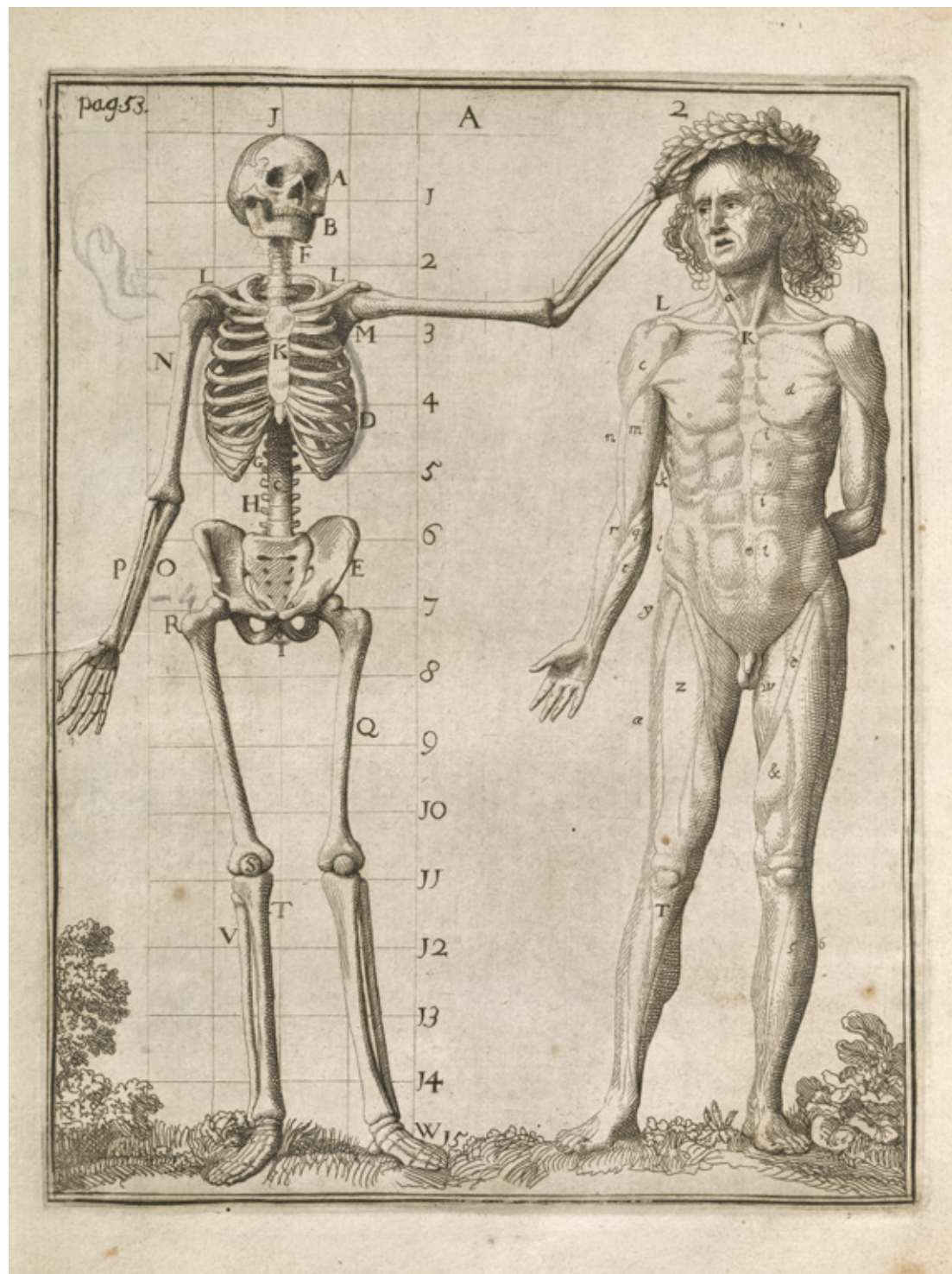


Fig. 6. Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627–78). Plate A, anatomy etching and engraving, platemark: 16.3 × 12.5 cm. From Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam: Fransois van Hoogstraeten, 1678), opposite p. 53.

Chapter Six
Of Fleшы Parts and Muscles and Their Actions, Shown in Figures
2, 3, and 4 in the Prints A and B [see fig. 6; fig. 7]

We will pass over the muscles that move the face and start with the neck.

[55]

- a. *Mastoidei*, the nodding muscles or mastoid process muscle, } pull the head in
- b. *Splenii*, the stretching muscles or splenius muscles, } different directions { forward.
backward.
upward.
- c. *Deltoides*, the triangular muscle or shoulder muscle, } pull the arm { forward.
backward.
further backward.
downward, as well as the
shoulder blade.
- d. *Pectoralis*, the breast muscle or pentagonal muscle, }
- e. *Infraspinatus*, the shoulder blade muscle or infraspinatus muscle, }
- f. *Rotundus*, the rower or the round muscle, }
- g. *Latissimus*, the shirt or broad muscle, }
- h. *Trapezius*, the monk's cowl muscle or table muscle, pulls the shoulder blade } upward.
downward.
backward.
- i. *Rectus*, the mattress or straight stomach muscle, } These push the ribs and
has three or four bands, mattress-like. } force out the breath.
- j. *Sacrolumbus*, the pusher or psoas major muscle. }
- k. *Serratus Major*, the saw or saw-like muscle. } These push out the ribs,
l. *Obliquus*, the slanted wire or waist-support. } so as to draw breath.
- m. *Biceps*, the mouse or two-headed muscle. } These bend the elbow.
- n. *Brachiaeus*, the companion or arm muscle. }
- o. *Longus*, the long, } or arm twins, these straighten or stretch the elbow.
- p. *Brevis*, the short, }
- q. *Rotundus pronator*, the twister or buyer, } these carry the spoke- } with the knuckles up.
r. *Longior Supinator*, the turner or seller, } bone and the hand } with the inners up.
- f. Right one of the three middle fingers, } of the bend or joint of the hand.
- s. *Extensores*, the straighteners or extenders, }
- t. *Flexores*, the benders or withdrawers, }
- u. *Major*, the seat cushion or the buttock. } These extend the thigh.
- v. *Medius*, the upper buttock or hip muscle. } The benders are hidden inside.
- w. *Triceps*, the three-headed muscle pulls the thigh inward.
- x. *Longus*, the nave or long one, } pull the shinbone { inward.
y. *Membranosus*, the membranous or the seamstress, } outward.
- z. *Rectus*, the maiden's cushion. } These straighten the shinbone, surround the patella, and affix with a
æ. *Vastus Externus*. } broad and joined chord the shinbone to the thighbone.
&. *Vastus Internus*.
- 1. *Semimembranosus*, the inward incliner or semi-membraneous. } The job of these is to bend the tibia or
2. *Seminervosus*, the semi-nerved kneeler. } make it incline.
3. *Gracilis*, the kneeler or narrow muscle. }
- 4. *Externus*, the outward incliner. }
- 5. *Tibiaeus*, the shin muscle. } These bend the foot.
- 6. *Peroneus*, the calf-muscle. }
- 7. *Gemelli*, the twins. } These straighten or stretch the foot.
- 8. *Soleus*, the solitary. }

sure, young painters, that you observe these things in living nature and learn how to put them on paper in a pleasant and unforced manner, and thus you will enjoy the true utility of this knowledge. Now it is time that we treat, in the same manner, the measure of a person.

Chapter Seven Of the Measurement of a Human Body

The proportionality in a human body is a wondrous agreement between the parts, both among one another and with the entirety. Some maintain that the ark that Noah made at God's command may have had something in common with the measure of a man lying flat on his back. For the text reads thus: "three hundred cubits shall be the length, the width of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits,"²⁴ which, according to the position of our figures in the letter C, would make up a figure or shape of fifteen palms in length, two palms and two inches in breadth (be it from the front or back), and a palm and two inches in depth (from the side) [fig. 8]. It is true that our figures do not agree with this, because they are broader in some places and narrower in other places. But the ark consisted of straight lines, and if one reckoned the broadest and smallest of a human figure together, then the similarity could possibly be found. However, let us not waste time on this, for I would like to supply young painters with so short an instruction that they would be through with it before they know. I will therefore provide a test with this verse, in which a statue of eight heads long is copied and divided into equal parts:

Noah's ark according to the measure of man.

Rough plan of the measures of figures 1 and 2 in plate C.

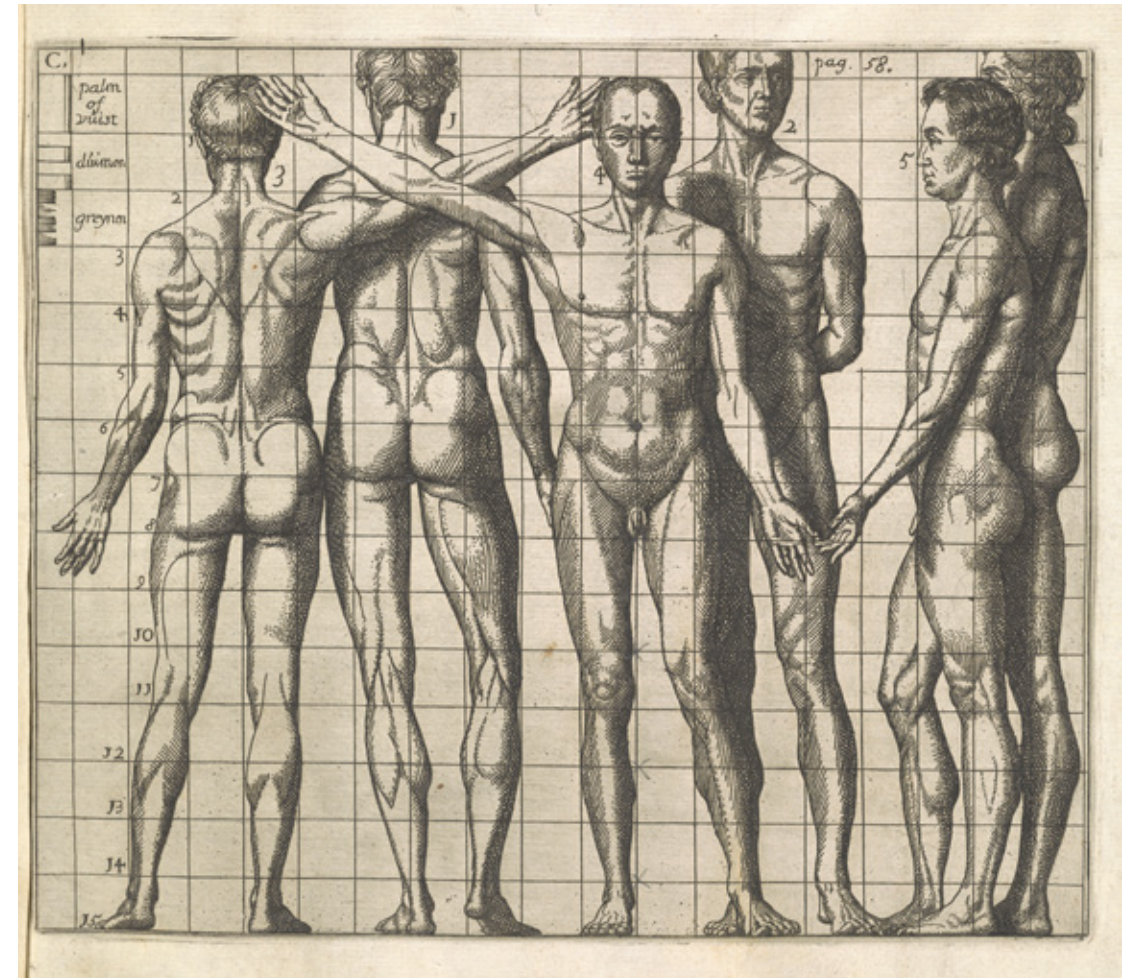
<p>One measures, in the old way, A figure, eight heads long, First from the top to the chin, Then between the nipples, Third until the navel,</p>	<p>Fourth down to the pecker, Fifth, to half the thigh, Sixth, below the knee, Seventh, on the shins, Eight, the end of the legs.</p>
---	---

[58] A fig leaf would have served us well here, but we dissect the naked truth. We also approve of the meaning of the following verses, even if they sound somewhat strange:

<p>A well-formed human's figure, Is as long as its just fathom.²⁵ Its midpoint is considered</p>	<p>To be in the arse and on the pubis But when outstretched on a cross, Then it falls exactly at the navel.</p>
---	---

The upper body of women is slightly longer, proportionately, than that of men. But now we are done with verses, if you do not skip the following:

With hand or face one divides
A tenth of the figure.



And this last one:

One has to devote
A sixth part to the foot.

If now you freely admit that small children with a bit of zeal can learn this, so will I mention along with this that great masters sometimes behave as though they themselves do not know as much.

Description of the Figures in Plate C

We shall make the effort to measure more accurately a figure shown from three sides. First, that of a man, which we will make seven and a half heads long. I will divide his entire length into fifteen modules of one-half head, or great palms, and indicate the width of the palms alongside. I find the number of fifteen very suitable, although I have read that the ancients usually employed the number twenty-one. I leave it to

Fig. 8.
Samuel van Hoogstraten
(Dutch, 1627–78). Plate C,
male anatomy etching and
engraving, platemark: 15.2
× 18.6 cm. From Samuel
van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding
tot de hooge schoole der
schilderkonst, anders de
zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam:
Fransois van Hoogstraeten,
1678), foldout following p. 58.

The pleasure of lovers in the slim slenderness or pious sturdiness of a virginal body differs considerably, as Cherea says in Terence:

The shoulders low, the breast compressed, and the body tightly girded,
 As thin as a rush, and that is considered beautiful:
 And a well-fed, big-bodied woman is called an Amazon,
 Or a sutler. But as far as mine is concerned,
 She is cut after the new fashion, plump,
 She has an honest hue, and well-nourished limbs.

Chapter Nine
Description of the Little Children in Print E [fig. 10]

First, I divide the top child, of four heads long, into eight palms (every palm being four thumbs and every thumb, as heretofore, being ten grains). As far as the length is concerned, I will deal with it briefly, so as not to cause any wasted labor. [62]



Fig. 10. Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627–78). Plate E, etching and engraving, platemark: 16.5 × 12.6 cm. From Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam: Fransois van Hoogstraeten, 1678), opposite p. 62.

	Palms Thumbs Grains				Palms Thumbs Grains				Palms Thumbs Grains		
<i>From the top of the skull downward</i>				<i>The child from the side is broad and thick</i>				<i>The child from the front and behind is broad</i>			
To the ear and the eyelid	1	0	0	Over the eyelid the neck is thick	1	3	5	Over the eyelid the neck	1	2	2
to the throat	1	0	0	at the middle of the breast	1	1	2	at the middle of the breast and shoulder	0	3	5
to the nipples	1	0	0	over the nipple	1	1	7		2	1	5
to the navel	1	0	0	over the short ribs	1	1	5	behind the armpits	1	3	4
to near the pubis	1	0	0	over the navel	1	1	7	the nipples are distant from each other	1	0	5
to above the knee	1	0	0	above the pubis	1	2	3	breadth of the soft part of the belly	1	2	5
to the midst of the shins and calves	1	0	0	the leg, below the buttocks	1	0	5	over the navel	1	3	6
to the soles	1	0	0	the knee	0	2	7	above the shame	2	0	5
the arm from the shoulder bone to the elbow	1	2	0	the thickest part of the calves	0	3	0	the leg below the shame	1	0	0
				the thinnest part of the calves, below, near the foot	0	2	0	at the knee	0	2	6
from the elbow to the hand	1	0	3	the arm from the side is thick in the shoulder	0	3	0	the calves	0	2	7
the foot is long	1	0	8	the biceps	0	2	6	the foot from the front	0	2	2
				at the elbow	0	2	0	in the biceps	0	2	1
				below the elbow	0	2	2	at the elbow	0	2	0
				near the hand	0	1	4	below the elbow	0	2	3
				the hand	0	1	3	on the hand	0	1	5
								the hand	0	2	1
								the heel from behind	0	1	5

This young child is four heads long. You may proceed to five, six, seven, or more heads in length, and, likewise, we have added here two of five heads long, one shown from the front and one from behind. It is sufficient that you have here learned to measure with palms, thumbs, and grains. Those who put most of their practice into this part of the art will see far enough through these glasses. It will be well worth his while to measure the principal parts of living or dead children himself, to see

[68]

CLIO

The Historian

The Third Book

Contents

The proud Clio incites us to strike a delightful chord.
 She provides a rich vein, in which the mind can playfully strive,
 To imagine, in the subtlest way, what was or has ever happened,
 And out of which components a work of art should consist.
 How to express, after one has considered a deed most carefully,
 Each place of origin, each person, according to his kind,
 And, as much as art allows, to show each passion,
 Each one's action as it appears to the eyes.
 She presents the figures as if on a stage,
 And challenges antiquity in search of glory.

On the Print

Here, History has ascended to the top of the world;
 She carries the book of heroes, and Fame's field trumpet,
 Through which is made known how chance has sometimes
 Buried in rubble and extinguished those who burned like torches.
 Over there Prince Phaeton drives the chariot of the Sun:
 There Jupiter is in council with the supreme powers:
 Here a battle is fought on land, there on water:
 Everything, whether one fights or suffers or conquers,
 Is driven by actions and passions of the soul.
 Rightly is this heroine dedicated to the god Mars.



[69] Fig. 11.
 Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627–78). *Clio, the Historian*, etching and engraving, platemark: 16.7 × 12.5 cm. From Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam: Francois van Hoogstraeten, 1678), opposite p. 68.